

**THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA**

Tuesday, June 3, 2003

1:30 P.M. Budget Worksession

MINUTES

Place: Commissioners' Room, second floor, Durham County Government Administrative Complex, 200 E. Main Street, Durham, NC

Present: Chairman Ellen W. Reckhow, Vice-Chairman Joe W. Bowser (arrived at 2:00 p.m.), and Commissioners Philip R. Cousin Jr., Becky M. Heron, and Mary D. Jacobs (arrived at 1:45 p.m.)

Superintendent Dr. Ann T. Denlinger, Associate Superintendent Hank Hurd, Associate Superintendent Bert L'Homme, and Assistant Superintendent Janice Hester

Durham Public Schools Board Chairman Kathryn Meyers and Board of Education members Gail M. Heath, Phillis Scott, and Steve Martin

Absent: School Board Members Dr. Regina George-Bowden and Reverend Michael Page

Presider: Chairman Reckhow

Call to Order

Chairman Reckhow convened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the budget worksession.

Board of Education FY 2003-2004 Budget Presentation

Chairman Ellen W. Reckhow recognized Durham Public Schools Board of Education Chairman Kathryn Meyers to present the Durham Public Schools budget request.

Chairman Meyers introduced the Board of Education members present.

Chairman Meyers said that the Board of Education had adopted a budget that was less than the budget presented them by Superintendent Denlinger. But it did align with the Board of Education's information and best understanding of the funds that would be available. The additional funding requested would be \$1.1 million to the schools. The school system reportedly had grave concerns regarding State cuts to programs as well as

how the local schools would absorb the reduction in teaching assistants (based on the allotment formula and holding the line on the current teacher allotment formula.) Chairman Meyers stated that the Board of Education was confident it could make the budget work. It was unanimously adopted and forwarded to the Board of County Commissioners. She said the Board was sensitive to the bond issue and excited about the positive poll results. If more money were secured for education, the school system would like to use those funds to purchase additional teaching positions.

Superintendent Denlinger said she believed that the Board of County Commissioners and the Board of Education were in agreement regarding the Durham Public Schools and this community's children. It must be figured out how to make the education program work in the best way possible. The Superintendent's proposed budget of \$4.7 million, which went to the Board of Education, reflected what it would take to open schools in August at the same level as last year. She stated that the Board of Education was in position to make significant cuts in the budget. Any additional dollars that the Commissioners might be able to allocate to the Durham Public Schools would go to hiring additional teacher positions that were lost.

The Board of County Commissioners asked questions and made remarks about the proposed FY 2003-2004 school budget.

Hank Hurd, Finance Director, responded to questions posed by the Commissioners. Superintendent Denlinger and Chairman Meyers assisted with the questions and comments.

Current implications are that the State budget reductions proposed for Durham Public Schools will total \$10,259,283. The impact on positions for regular education teachers and exceptional children teachers totals 130 positions.

Durham County Budget—Review of “Additions/Deletions, Finalize Budget”

The County Commissioners reviewed a revised list provided by the County Manager. The list was divided into three areas: Commissioner-Requested Additions/Subtractions, Manager's Recommended Addition/Subtractions, and Recommended Revenue Changes.

Commissioner-Recommended Additions/Subtractions

Chairman Reckhow requested that the Commissioners review this list to bring forth any questions or disagreements about its items. She said that any questions or disagreements should be discussed today so that adjustments could be made.

The Commissioners had a lengthy discussion about the list.

Chairman Reckhow requested that the Board get some type of signed agreement from the District Attorney and the Public Defender, who are working in the two positions, that would outline their area of responsibility. Quarterly reports should be submitted to the

County Commissioners regarding their caseload and quarterly activities. Performance measurements should be established with clear objectives for the year. The positions should monitored.

Chairman Reckhow instructed the County Manager to take the \$31,000 in the proposed budget and put it in Nondepartmental to accommodate changes to the Pay-for-Performance Plan that will be studied during the summer months and considered by the Commissioners in the fall. A new pay strategy will be developed for the County employees.

County Manager Ruffin said, in his opinion, the Pay-for-Performance was the way to proceed. He said the pay plan has something wrong with it; it is flawed. The Commissioners are presented “fixes” every year. The County needs to revisit the issue of its pay plan and work. Consideration should be given to correcting this problem in a constructive way. The project will take more than six months to complete.

Chairman Reckhow requested that the Pay-for-Performance Plan be put on hold. The Commissioners would discuss it in the fall. The \$31,000 would be put in a Nondepartmental account.

Chairman Reckhow requested to put the additional funding for the school system in as a “place holder” at this point.

The John Avery Boys and Girls Club, Project Learn, Reinstatement of Longevity, and the Holloway Neighborhood Achievement School were “red flagged” for further consideration by the Commissioners.

Manager’s Recommended Addition/Subtractions

Chairman Reckhow stated that, based on today’s discussion, it sounded like the Commissioners were comfortable with the Manager’s recommended additions and subtractions.

Recommended Revenue Changes

Chairman Reckhow said that, based on this discussion, it sounded like the Commissioners were comfortable with the recommended revenue changes.

Commissioner-Requested Additions/Subtractions (Continued)

Chairman Reckhow said that a question mark would be placed on the nonprofit line item concerning the Holloway Neighborhood Achievement School. The total amount was \$100,000.

The Chairman said there was some disagreement on the Nondepartmental line item concerning longevity in the amount of \$526,596. Some of the Commissioners supported the item and some did not.

Chairman Reckhow said that it appeared there was majority support for all the items in the Commissioner-Requested Additions/Subtractions with the exception of the Holloway Neighborhood Achievement School.

Commissioner Heron stated that she wanted the record to draw attention to the fact that the increase in Animal Control fees would be covered. The increase in the contract price would be covered by fees. She said that presently, the shelter was housing 28 pit bull dogs.

Chairman Reckhow stated that most of these major issues appeared to be resolved. The Commissioners would receive more information on the Holloway Neighborhood Achievement School.

County Manager Ruffin called the Commissioners' attention to the salary of the Board of Elections Director. The salary increase was in the budget. The Commissioners would have to approve an agreement. The Manager stated that the item would be brought to the June 23, 2003 Regular Session agenda for approval.

The County Manager said that he had talked to some people about funding the Literacy Council through the Workforce Development Board.

Chairman Reckhow said she hoped the Workforce Development Board would fund the Literacy Council.

The Manager said that the contacts for the Holloway Neighborhood Achievement School would be notified that the application was due on June 9, 2003.

Chairman Reckhow suggested that the meeting on June 12, 2003 was not needed. She said this was because the Board had largely covered the issues on the budget. The Board could discuss any outstanding budget items on the June 9, 2003 meeting as the last agenda item.

Chairman Reckhow instructed the County Manager to bring to the June 9, 2003 Commissioner meeting any information he might have concerning the Holloway Neighborhood Achievement School.

County Manager Ruffin and Chairman Reckhow said the only budget item requiring finalization was the Holloway Neighborhood Achievement School.

Chairman Reckhow instructed County Manager Ruffin to contact Durham Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Ann Denlinger to let her know what the Commissioners were tentatively considering. If the Holloway Neighborhood Achievement School would not

be fully funded or funded at all, the \$100,000 would go to Durham Public Schools to employ teachers.

Adjournment

Chairman Reckhow adjourned the meeting at 3:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Garry E. Umstead, CMC
Clerk to the Board